

DEERFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
Meeting Minutes – July 9, 2012

**Members Present:** Serita Frey, Wes Golomb, Kate Hartnett, Dave Linden, Herb McKinney

**Town Forest Protection Project:**

**Dan Kern** from Bear-Paw Regional Greenways and volunteer **Frank Mitchell** were on hand to present a preliminary draft of the conservation easement document for the Town Forest Protection project. Mr. Kern proposed creating a single document which would cover all seven town properties, eliminating the need to record seven separate documents. As a result, research would be simplified since the specifics of each easement could be found in one place.

Wes Golomb questioned whether the easement language would adequately cover the specific nature and intent of each of the seven original deeds. Mr. Kern responded that all possible uses were well within the restrictions of the easement and that the easement document does not undo any existing deed restrictions. Serita Frey noted that the easement for the Freese Town Forest was kept general; public input was sought for specific uses. Wes Golomb expressed the concern of one resident that the town would lose its ability to determine how the property could be used.

Further discussion of the draft resulted in the following suggestions:

- Create a table of proposed uses for each of the properties
- Create a separate document outlining specific uses and/or restrictions for each parcel
- Conduct a public forum for input as was done for the Freese Town Forest
- Seek public input *after* the group is satisfied with the wording
- Strive to have as much as possible “written in stone”
- Keep the document generic and reserve the right to be more specific
- Ensure that the original grantors’ wishes are reflected in the document
- Establish the grantors’ *intent* for each of the seven properties
- Include language “*does not supersede the original deed*”
- Eliminate the need to require research of multiple documents to establish/define the original intent
- Include a subsection or an appendix with specifics that are readily available
- Insert a *matrix* of donors’ wishes at the beginning of the document
- Incorporate the restrictions into *Appendix A* with the property descriptions
- Include *purposes* for each parcel within the requirements of the *Stewardship Plan*
- Include a provision *for research for scientific purposes*

The following additional points were made:

- The primary purpose of the easement is to prevent the land from being developed
- Conducting the public forum *prior* to approval of the easement deed could delay completion
- Section “C” of the document sets the minimal standards with the sections that follow being more restrictive, and locked in with the easement deed
- Details inserted into the deed now, cannot be removed at a later date if modification is desired
- *Professional Supervision* requirement eliminated from language; may utilize non-professional groups
- Respecting the intent of individual donors will serve to reassure/encourage potential future donors
- The language of *3B* is too generic and needs revision; public input needed with focus on *A & B*
- *Public Access* is included as a purpose; intended uses should be consistent with purposes of easement
- After agreement as a group, the document will be reviewed by the town’s attorney
- Completion by the end of the year is desired to be preceded by a public meeting prior to October

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Herb McKinney and Kate Hartnett will collaborate on producing a *matrix of uses* with input, via e-mail, from the members to fill in the various uses. Serita Frey encouraged the members to read the draft and be prepared to discuss and provide their input at the next meeting.

Frank Mitchell shared some additional background information on the following parcels:

- Dowst-Cate was given by Gilbert Knowles in exchange for back taxes
- Language designating the parcel for *Conservation Purposes* was omitted from the Hart Town Forest deed. Verbal approval was given for forestry activity.
- The McNeil parcel is in fact the Agnes B. McNeil Conservation Area
- Contact will be made with the Menard family to determine the donor's intent for the Lindsay property

Dan Kern informed the members that a grant has enabled Bear-Paw Regional Greenways and Southeast Land Trust to work jointly on landowner outreach with the assistance of Phil Auger. A map representing the character, size and environmental contributions of the focus areas was presented. It is the intent of the two groups to establish contact with and gauge the interest of owners of large tracts of land, and to develop a list of potential donors for each of the towns served by the two groups. At Mr. Kern's request, Serita Frey will provide a letter of recommendation for them on behalf of the DCC.

Bear-Paw is also updating its nine-town natural resource inventory. Kate Hartnett requested that the Deerfield Open Space Plan be incorporated in any update.

**Land Conservation:**

Dan Kern, Frank Mitchell and Herb McKinney have completed the monitoring of the Curry property.

**Town Forest Protection Project:** It was reported that Tom Brouillette had completed surveys of those town properties which had not previously been surveyed as part of the project. Those particular parcels were also blazed as they were surveyed. Dan Kern has arranged to have the plan for Dowst-Cate recorded after discovering the omission.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the June meeting were approved with one abstention.

**Financial Officer's Report:** A copy of the financial report for May was submitted on behalf of Erick Berglund, indicating an ending balance in the Conservation Fund of \$234,071.16.

**Land Conservation:** No Report

**Regulated Wetlands:** No Report

**Old Business:** Herb McKinney reported on the purchase of medallions for blazing of the town forests. Previously, permission had been granted for the purchase not to exceed \$350. The final cost of the proposed medallions would be \$418.50 due to its round shape. The members voted unanimously to approve the purchase of the proposed design at a cost not to exceed \$450.

**New Business:**

**UNH Study:** Serita Frey reported on a request from UNH to conduct foliage sampling as part of a project sponsored by the National Science Foundation to study the impacts of land use and climate change on forest health. Ms. Frey brought a request from UNH researchers to collect leaf samples from the Weiss and Dowst-Cate town forests and the McNeil Conservation Area for which permission for previous soil sampling had been

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given by the town. Kate Hartnett was assured that wildlife would not be negatively impacted. The members voted unanimously in support of the proposed activities.

**Announcements:**

Serita Frey announced that she would not be available to chair the regularly scheduled meeting on August 13<sup>th</sup>. The group chose to postpone the meeting to the 20<sup>th</sup> of August at 7 PM.

**Lamprey River Committee Vacancy:** Due to a recent conflict in schedule, Wes Golomb announced that he would be resigning from the Lamprey River oversight committee as one of the two representatives from Deerfield. A replacement is being sought to attend the meetings which are held on the third Thursday of each month at a location that rotates among the participating towns. Volunteers are actively being sought and may contact Wes Golomb for more information.

As explained on the **UNH Cooperative Extension Service** website, <http://extension.unh.edu/FWT/Coverts.htm>  
*‘The New Hampshire Coverts Project trains volunteers to promote wildlife habitat conservation and forest stewardship.... Twenty-five individuals will be chosen from the list of applicants to attend the fall workshop scheduled for **October 3-6, 2012**. The workshop will be held at the rustic, beautiful Barbara C. Harris Conference Center in Greenfield, New Hampshire. Accepted applicants pay a \$50 registration fee to secure their spot in the workshop, with all other costs--including food, lodging, and materials--funded by program sponsors. The workshop offers you an opportunity to get to know and to work with natural resource professionals from around the state. It will be fun, educational, and you'll become part of a volunteer network that will keep in touch through newsletters, field tours and future workshops.’* Anyone interested in participating should apply as soon as possible due to the limited number of openings. Application can be made on line using the above link.

**UNH Speakers Programs:** In addition to the Coverts project, speakers from both **UNH Cooperative Extension and NH Fish & Game** are available for interested groups on a variety of topics.

**LCIP Grant \$:** September 7 is the deadline to apply for funds from an LCIP surplus.

**FORUM Print Edition:** Herb McKinney made special note of the outstanding job done by Forum staff in presenting the information on the numerous conservation properties located within the four-town area. Dave Linden will contact the publication to inform them that the privately held Linden Conservation Area was erroneously listed as a town-owned property.

**Adjournment:** 9:00 PM

**The Next Meeting is presently scheduled for August 20th.**

*The draft minutes were prepared and submitted by Judy Marshall. Final revisions to these minutes will be contained in the minutes of the following meeting, after approval by the Deerfield Conservation Commission*